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ABSTRACT

Recent trials have brought the issue of date rape into public awareness. It is appropriate to examine the impact of variables such as the appearance of the accuser, the relationship between the accuser and the defendant, and the behavior of the accuser and defendant on attributions of responsibility in a rape situation. This study manipulated subject sex, type of rape (stranger versus acquaintance), and the power strategy (indirect/unilateral versus direct/bilateral) used by the rape victim to resist her assailant. College student subjects (N=87) read what they were told were excerpts from police interviews with both a rape victim and her assailant. In all conditions the victim was described as a 20-year-old college junior who was assaulted in her apartment near campus. The defendant was described as a 22-year-old without a criminal record or any trouble with the law. At the end of the transcript subjects were informed that the defendant was tried and convicted of rape. While subject sex did not affect attributions of assailant responsibility, females saw the scenario as more likely and serious than males. Also, females felt more empathy for the victim in stranger than acquaintance rape. While empathy for the assailant was greatest when the victim used an indirect/unilateral strategy in acquaintance rape, empathy for the assailant in stranger rape was greater when the victim used a direct/bilateral strategy. (ABL)

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Attributions in rape: Effects of type of rape and victim power strategy

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ABSTRACT

The present research manipulated subject sex, type of rape (stranger versus acquaintance), and the power strategy (indirect/unilateral versus direct/bilateral) used by a rape victim to resist her assailant. While subject sex did not affect attributions of assailant responsibility, females saw the scenario as more likely and serious. Also, females felt more empathy for the victim in stranger than acquaintance rape. While empathy for the assailant was greatest when the victim used an indirect/unilateral strategy acquaintance rape, empathy for the assailant in stranger rape was greater when the victim used a direct/bilateral strategy. The data are interpreted in terms of a modification of Shaver's (1970) notion of defensive attribution. The implications of the data for future research on power strategies are noted.

The recent trials of William Kennedy Smith and Mike Tyson have brought the issue of date rape into public awareness. When the defendant admits to sexual intercourse but claims the sex was consensual, the trial becomes quickly oversimplified into a "she said-he said" confrontation since physical evidence of coercion may be missing. Jurors, however, are forced to make a decision between the claims of the accuser and the denials of the defendant and, in the process, decide on the credibility of the accuser and the accused. In deciding credibility, jurors may focus on the behavior of both. Therefore, it is appropriate to examine the impact of variables such as the appearance of the accuser, the relationship between accuser and defendant, and the behavior of the accuser and defendant on attributions of responsibility in a rape situation. Specifically, the present research explores the impact of the power strategy the victim uses to refuse a sexual advance as well as the extent of the relationship between the accuser and the accused on attributions of responsibility.

Falbo and Peplau (1980) have argued that men and women use different power strategies in intimate relationships. Their research has indicated that influence strategies can be ordered on two dimensions: direct-indirect and bilateral-unilateral. Direct strategies, such as asking and talking, involve direct confrontation in order to gain compliance whereas indirect strategies, such as hinting, avoid direct confrontation. Although bilateral strategies, such as persuasion, require some response from the target of influence, unilateral strategies, such as withdrawal, do not. Falbo and Peplau (1980) found that women are more likely to use indirect/unilateral strategies such as withdrawal to influence an intimate partner while males more often employ direct/bilateral strategies. Moreover, Falbo and Peplau (1980) report that

indirect/unilateral strategies are seen as less effective than direct/bilateral strategies by both men and women and that women using them do not expect compliance.

Cowan, Drinkard, & MacGavin (1984) extended the initial Falbo and Peplau (1980) research by examining power strategies used by teenagers in influencing parents and peers. They found that indirect/unilateral strategies were used to influence fathers, presumably because they had greater power and greater resources to enforce compliance. On the other hand, direct/bilateral strategies were used to influence mothers and peers, perhaps because teenagers did not see them as possessing greater power. Cowan, Drinkard, & MacGavin (1984) conclude that preference for power strategy depends more on the perceived power of the person being influenced than on the gender of the person making the influence attempt. Therefore, both men and women may use an indirect/unilateral strategy when attempting to influence a higher status target because those strategies contain elements of deference expected by a target of higher status. Direct/bilateral strategies with their direct, confrontational approach may be more effective when the target is of equal or lower status since deference may be interpreted as weakness.

In both studies cited, self-reports of the power strategies actually used to influence a partner in an intimate relationship were studied. In addition to self-reports, it is important to examine how observers of the influence attempts evaluate the utility of power strategies. For example, in a workplace, observers of an interaction between people will make attributions about participants based on what they see. Or, in a rape case, jurors are required to decide responsibility based on the testimony presented in the trial. In both cases, reactions of observers to the use of a particular power

strategy may be quite different from the intent of an actor attempting to influence another. Moreover, Johnson (1976) has argued that gender differences in the exercise of power occur in interactions other than intimate ones because those differences are an integral part of sex role socialization. She has argued that women tend to use strategies which are indirect, personal, and helpless while men use strategies which are direct, concrete, and competent. Women, according to Johnson (1976), use these strategies because they have less access to resources than men. The use of these strategies according to Johnson (1976) reinforces the stereotype that women have less power than men.

One area in which gender differences in the exercise of influence may be important is the workplace. Women in the workplace are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, they may use indirect/unilateral strategies which are consistent with gender role expectations to influence another, but the use of such strategies may be seen as ineffective. On the other hand, if women use direct/bilateral strategies which are seen as more effective, they may be devalued for violating gender role expectations. In two studies (DeLamarter & Hunt, 1990; Bullock & DeLamarter, 1989), subjects were asked to evaluate the suitability of managerial candidates for promotion based on variables such as candidate gender, subject gender, power strategy used by the candidate, status of the target, and gender of the target. In general, male and female subjects rated male managerial candidates more positively and felt that the use of direct/bilateral strategies was more effective than the use of indirect/unilateral strategies, extending the conclusions of Falbo and Peplau (1980). Interestingly, using a gender inappropriate strategy (e.g., a male using an indirect/bilateral strategy) was seen more negatively for male

candidates than for female candidates (Bullock & DeLamarter, 1989). DeLamarter and Hunt (1990) found, unlike Cowan, Drinkard & MacGavin (1984), that status of the target of influence had no effect on ratings of the effectiveness of power strategies. Since subjects were rating the actions of others, the calculations concerning the appropriateness of a strategy which may be important when deciding on a strategy could be lost on observers.

In both studies, subject gender had little effect on ratings of power strategies. However, in a different setting, gender differences in the evaluation of the exercise of power may be more evident. One such setting is a sexual assault. When resisting an assault, a victim must decide on whether to use a direct/bilateral strategy which, because it is direct and confrontational, may clearly indicate her refusal of sex or an indirect/unilateral strategy which, although consistent with sex role socialization (Johnson, 1976), may not as clearly indicate her refusal. For male and female jurors, evidence about the power strategy used by the victim to resist may be essential in determining whether the sex was consensual or not. For male and female jurors, evidence that the victim used a direct/bilateral strategy such as reasoning should reinforce the accuser's claim that sex was non-consensual unless those jurors accept rape myths (e.g., Burt, 1980) such as women who go to a man's apartment on the first date are asking for sex or that women do not really mean "No" when they say it. On the other hand, women who use indirect/unilateral strategies such as withdrawal may present a more ambiguous situation, especially for male jurors. As Abbey (1982) has noted, men see the world in a more sexualized manner than women. Thus, a strategy such as withdrawal may be seen erroneously as consent by males. For females, however, evidence that the victim used an

indirect/unilateral strategy may not be interpreted as tacit consent since they may be more cognizant of the use of indirect/unilateral strategies by women, particularly when attempting to influence a male who is seen as more powerful (Cowan, Drinkard, & MacGavin, 1984). Thus, unlike the work situation, one would expect that males and females would evaluate the victim of a sexual assault differently depending on the victim's use of power strategies to resist the assailant.

To explore the consequences of victim power strategy, Stevens and DeLamarter (1991) manipulated subject gender, power strategy, and assault outcome (rape versus rape avoidance). Subjects listened to an audio tape which they were told was a recreation of a date in which the male attempted to assault the female. In the direct/bilateral conditions, the female argued with the male, clearly expressing her refusal of sex. In the indirect/unilateral conditions, the female objected to sex but was essentially passive. At the end of the tape, the male either left indignantly (rape avoidance) or raped the female. The data indicated that males identified with the assailant, holding him less responsible and having more empathy with him than females, while females empathized with the victim and did not hold her responsible. Nevertheless, if the victim used an indirect/unilateral strategy to refuse sex, she was held more responsible than if she used a direct/bilateral strategy. In general, indirect/unilateral strategies were devalued, perhaps because they contributed to the ambiguity of the situation. Power strategy by outcome interactions generally showed that direct/bilateral strategies were rated more positively than indirect/unilateral strategies when rape was avoided, but were seen as equally useful when rape occurred, perhaps because the strategies were unsuccessful.

The results of the Stevens and DeLamarter (1991) research showed a general pattern of same sex identification. However, within that general pattern, it was clear that a victim using an indirect/unilateral strategy such as withdrawal was seen as partially responsible for her victimization and that her strategy was viewed negatively, particularly when rape was avoided. Nevertheless, the research left other questions unanswered. Among those questions were whether attributions would change if the assailant was a stranger or an acquaintance. Intuitively, one would argue that acquaintance rape would be seen as more ambiguous than stranger rape. Because there exists some sort of relationship between the assailant and the victim, there is also at least the possibility that some type of consent was involved. Thus, the behavior of the assailant and the victim would be more closely scrutinized in determining attributions of responsibility. If the victim clearly indicated her refusal of sex through the use of a direct/bilateral strategy, it would seem that the assailant would be held responsible. On the other hand, if the victim used an indirect/unilateral strategy there may be the assumption of consent. On the other hand, if the assailant is a stranger, the meaning of an indirect/unilateral strategy such as withdrawal may be interpreted differently. It has been demonstrated (Bart, 1981; Bart & O'Brien, 1985) that women can avoid rape by resisting. And yet, women have also been told that they should not do anything to anger or provoke an assailant for fear that he will seriously injure, or perhaps kill, the victim. If jurors accept that the victim of a stranger rape was fearful, they may interpret the use of an indirect/unilateral strategy such as withdrawal as a natural fearfulness reaction rather than consent and not assume that the victim bears any responsibility for the assault. If, however, jurors accept the argument that

indirect/unilateral strategies are characteristic of women (e.g., Johnson, 1976; Falbo & Peplau, 1980), a victim using such a strategy may be seen as simply responding in a role appropriate manner and be seen sympathetically regardless of whether the assailant was a stranger or an acquaintance.

To address these issues, the present research manipulated subject gender, victim power strategy, and type of assault (stranger versus acquaintance). Based on the Stevens and DeLamarter (1991) research, it was predicted that males would hold the victim more responsible than females and that females would attribute more responsibility to the assailant than the victim. This general pattern of same sex identification should be moderated by the victim's power strategy with indirect/unilateral strategies seen more negatively than direct/bilateral strategies. Finally, males should see the victim's use of an indirect/unilateral strategy in acquaintance rape as implied consent whereas it would be seen as a fear reaction in stranger rape. Thus, males should see the victim as more responsible than females when the victim used an indirect/unilateral strategy to resist the assailant.

Method

Subjects and Design

Eighty seven students enrolled in introductory psychology classes participated for extra credit in a factorial study manipulating sex of subject, type of rape (stranger versus acquaintance), and strategy used by the victim (direct/bilateral versus indirect/unilateral). Subjects were randomly assigned to experimental conditions.

Procedure

Instead of hearing an audio tape as in the Stevens and DeLamarter (1991) study, subjects were told that they would be reading excerpts from police

interviews with both a rape victim and her assailant. In all conditions, the victim was described as a 20 year old college junior who was assaulted in her apartment near the campus. The defendant was described as a 22 year old without a criminal record or any trouble with the law. In the acquaintance condition, the defendant was described as a fellow student and the transcript indicated that he and the victim referred to each other by name. In addition, the victim stated that they had talked after classes and at parties. In fact, she stated that she though he was going to ask her out once. In the stranger condition, the defendant was described as an employee of a local company who had never met the defendant.

In the interview, the victim stated that the defendant knocked on her door and asked to use the telephone to call a friend because his car had broken down. After using the telephone, the victim and defendant had a brief conversation and then the defendant asked for a drink of water. The victim complied. While the victim was getting the water, the defendant came up behind her and began to fondle her. In the direct/bilateral power strategy condition, the victim described reasoning with the defendant telling him that she was not interested in sex and that "...sex without love is meaningless." In the interview she clearly indicated that she had said "No." In the indirect/unilateral conditions, the victim described how she initially told him "...I was having my period, hoping that he would leave me alone." When he did not stop, she stated that she froze and acted very distant, cold, and withdrawn. In all conditions, the victim stated that she did not fight or struggle with the defendant because "He seemed so big and I didn't want to make him angry. I was afraid that he would really hurt me."

The defendant essentially agreed with the description of the events of

the rape but argued that the sex was consensual. In both conditions, the defendant claimed that, by her behavior and the robe she was wearing, the victim indicated her interest in sex. The defendant dismissed the victim's resistance by stating in the direct/bilateral condition that women often say "No" but really mean "Yes." In the indirect/unilateral condition the defendant stated that women are often cold initially as a way of protecting their reputation. Both arguments used by the defendant are consistent with rape myths (Burt, 1980). In both conditions, the defendant claimed he did not rape the victim because he did not threaten her either verbally or with a weapon. Finally, the victim and defendant both stated that after the assault the defendant expressed a desire to see the victim again.

At the end of the transcript, subjects were informed that the defendant was tried and convicted of rape.

After reading the transcript, subjects completed a questionnaire measuring the effectiveness of the manipulations, attributions of responsibility and empathy, and evaluations of the power strategies. At the conclusion of the study, subjects were fully debriefed about the experiment, told about rape myths, provided a written debriefing which included information about rape counseling services, thanked, and dismissed.

Results

Manipulation Checks

The data indicated that the manipulations operated as expected. A measure of clarity of communication yielded a main effect of strategy, F (1, 79) = 10.06, $p < .05$, with subjects rating the victim's resistance in the direct/bilateral condition (M = 2.91) as clearer than in the indirect/unilateral strategy condition (M = 4.10). In a separate measure, a

main effect of type of assault, F (1, 79) = 218.35, $p < .05$, indicated that subjects in the acquaintance condition (M = 4.82) felt the victim knew the defendant better than in the stranger condition (M = 6.84). There were no other main effects or interactions for these measures.

Evaluations of the Assault

Females (M = 1.96) rated the events described as more likely than males (M = 2.23), F (1,79) = 7.03, $p < .05$, and as more serious, F (1,79) = 5.19, $p < .05$, (females, M = 6.09; males, M = 5.48). An interaction between subject gender and type of assault indicated that stranger rape was seen as more serious by females (M = 6.39) than males (M = 5.20) while acquaintance rape was seen as serious by both females (M = 5.79) and males (M = 5.75), F (1,79) = 4.51, $p < .05$. In addition, males (M = 3.23) felt that less force was used in the rape than females (M = 3.91), F (1,79) = 4.35, $p < .05$. Finally, there were no differences among groups in the length of sentence given to the assailant.

Measures of Responsibility

A measure asking subjects to rate the victim's responsibility for the assault failed to yield differences among experimental conditions. In general, subjects did not see the victim as responsible for the assault. On a measure of defendant responsibility, there was a main effect of subject gender, F (1,79) = 4.55, $p < .05$. Females (M = 8.40) felt the defendant was more responsible than males (M = 7.40). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the responsibility measures used a 10 point scale and both female and male subjects saw the assailant as responsible for the assault.

Measures of Empathy and Similarity

Table 1 presents a summary of the analyses of variance for the measures

of similarity and empathy with the victim and assailant. Although there were

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no differences among conditions for a measure of similarity with the defendant, measures of similarity and empathy with the victim yielded a number of effects. Females (M = 4.31) felt more similar to the victim than males (M = 1.95), F (1,79) = 34.27, $p < .05$ and felt more empathy with the victim, F (1,79) = 14.93, $p < 05$, (females, M = 6.06; males, M = 4.88). Females felt more empathy for the victim in the stranger rape scenario (M = 6.52) than the acquaintance scenario (M = 4.64) while the pattern was reversed for males (acquaintance, M = 5.10; stranger, M = 4.65), F (1,79) = 4.72, $p < .05$. On the other hand, empathy with the assailant was affected by type of assault and power strategy, F (1,79) = 6.48, $p < .05$. Subjects felt more empathy with the assailant in the stranger rape conditions when the victim used a direct/bilateral strategy (M = 5.33) than when she used an indirect/unilateral strategy (M = 6.41). However, when acquaintance rape occurred, greater empathy for the assailant was felt when the victim used an indirect/unilateral strategy (M = 5.10) than a direct/bilateral strategy (M = 5.68).

A three way interaction was found for the measure of similarity, F (1,79) = 4.41, $p < .01$. As Table 2 indicates, although females felt greater

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similarity with the victim, they felt more similar to the victim than men when she used a direct/bilateral strategy in acquaintance rape (females M = 4.83;

males $\underline{M}$ = 1.60). There was no difference between male ($\underline{M}$ = 2.30) and female ($\underline{M}$ = 4.55) subjects when the victim used a direct/bilateral strategy in stranger rape. Similarly, female subjects felt more similar to the victim than males when she used an indirect/unilateral strategy in stranger rape (females, $\underline{M}$ = 1.20: males, $\underline{M}$ = 4.42), while there was no difference between male ($\underline{M}$ = 2.70) and female ($\underline{M}$ = 4.42) subjects as a function of type of rape when she used an indirect/unilateral strategy.

Evaluations of Power Strategies

Evaluations of the power strategy used by the victim yielded main effects for measures of directness, $\underline{F}$ (1,79) = 19.31, $\underline{p} < .01$, competence, $\underline{F}$ (1,79) = 4.67, $\underline{p} < .05$, powerfulness, $\underline{F}$ (1,79) = 8.14, $\underline{p} < .05$, and effectiveness, $\underline{F}$ (1,79) = 7.34, $\underline{p} < .05$. Direct/bilateral strategies were seen as more direct ($\underline{M}$ = 3.93), competent ($\underline{M}$ = 4.42), powerful ($\underline{M}$ = 5.26), and effective ($\underline{M}$ = 5.95) than indirect/unilateral strategies (direct, $\underline{M}$ = 5.48; competent, $\underline{M}$ = 5.00; powerful, $\underline{M}$ = 6.02; effective, $\underline{M}$ = 6.57). The interaction between subject gender and power strategy, $\underline{F}$ (1,79) = 5.05, $\underline{p} < .05$, indicated that females saw the victim as expecting more compliance by the assailant when she used a direct/bilateral strategy ($\underline{M}$ = 2.30) than an indirect/unilateral strategy ($\underline{M}$ = 3.42) whereas males saw the victim as expecting more compliance when she used an indirect/unilateral strategy ($\underline{M}$ = 2.55) than a direct/bilateral strategy ($\underline{M}$ = 3.65). Interestingly, there were no differences among conditions on a measure of the masculinity or femininity of the power strategy.

Discussion

The data show that subjects did not hold the victim responsible for the assault and that there were no differences among conditions in the length of

the sentence given to the assailant. While these results are contrary to expectations, it is likely that informing subjects that the defendant was convicted affected judgments of victim responsibility and the measure of sentence length. Nevertheless, it is clear from the data that subject gender did affect perceptions of the assault. For example, females felt that the scenario was more likely, more serious, required more force, and blamed the defendant more than males. Such a pattern is to be expected if one considers the degree of threat to self posed in the scenarios. For females, the fear is in being a victim of an assault, and for a male, the fear is in being accused of being a perpetrator. By indicating that they felt the assault likely, serious, and required force as well as by blaming the male, females may have been expressing their own sense of vulnerability to assault. Male subjects, on the other hand, may have felt a need to minimize the incident since the assault was conducted by a male.

This pattern of results is conceptually consistent with, and extends, the notion of defensive attribution (Shaver, 1970). In general, the defensive attribution research has addressed attributions of responsibility for an accident. Subjects who feel similar to the victim of the accident and who feel that the accident is relevant to them are motivated to engage in defensive attributions, either harm avoidance or blame avoidance (Thornton, 1984). In harm avoidance, subjects can see themselves as potential victims and thus want to avoid the harm which could befall them should a similar event occur. On the other hand, blame avoidance occurs when subjects can see themselves accused of an action and attempt to avoid blame for the event. Jensen and Gutek (1982) extended the argument to sexual harassment, noting that males would be more likely to blame the victim than females. In general,

defensive avoidance is seen a means whereby victims are derogated as a means of distancing oneself for the injury either done to a victim or caused by a perpetrator. The present research did not include traditional measures of derogation except for the measure of victim responsibility. While the present research did not find gender differences in responsibility attributed to the victim, again perhaps because the subjects were told the defendant was convicted, it may extend the notion of defensive attribution further. In a rape situation, particularly when there is a dispute over whether the sex was consensual, male and female judges may view the situation differently. Female subjects, seeing themselves as potential victims of a date rapist, may have been motivated to see the situation as more harmful and dangerous than males. Thus, they would see the incident as more likely, serious, and requiring more force than males. More importantly, they would hold the male assailant more responsible than male subjects. Males, on the other hand, would be concerned that the behavior of the male assailant could be generalized to include all males, perhaps including themselves. Thus, they might be motivated to avoid blame for the incident and see it as less likely, serious, and requiring less force. Additionally, while conceding that the male assailant was responsible for the assault, they felt he was less responsible than females.

This modified notion of defensive attribution is consistent with the subject gender by type of assault interactions for the measures of seriousness and empathy with the victim. Females felt that stranger rape was more serious than acquaintance rape while males felt that acquaintance rape was more serious than stranger rape. For females, being assaulted by a stranger is more frightening, and thus more serious, than being assaulted by an acquaintance because there may be little perceived possibility of stopping a

stranger. Females, putting themselves in the position of the victim, might feel that they could do something to avoid the assault in acquaintance rape. For males, an acquaintance rape may be seen as more serious because it violates the trust essential in a dating relationship. Thus, there is a greater need to distance themselves from the assailant described in the scenario and avoid the possibility of being accused of acquaintance rape by seeing the incident as serious. If there is little the victim can do to avoid stranger rape and if male subjects see themselves as unlikely to be accused of stranger rape, it may be rated as less serious. It is important to note that the same pattern of means was found for a measure of empathy with the victim. Female subjects empathized with the victim more when she was a victim of stranger rape than when she was a victim of acquaintance rape whereas male subjects empathized more with the victim when she was a victim of acquaintance rape. Again, if females put themselves in the position of the victim and if stranger rape is seen as more frightening than acquaintance rape, the victim was harmed more in stranger rape and deserves more empathy. For males, however, perhaps because they fear they could be accused of rape, acquaintance rape is the higher risk and thus the victim deserves greater empathy than in the stranger rape conditions. Again, this explanation of the data is conceptually consistent with Shaver's (1970) concept of defensive attributions. The motivations of males and females are different as they come to terms with what is described. Nevertheless, it is very important to remember that the present research did not find evidence of victim derogation which is characteristic of defensive attributions.

Further support for the modified defensive attribution argument can be found in the measure of similarity with the victim. While the subject gender

main effect may reflect the obvious fact that the victim was female, the three way interaction is a bit more complex. Females saw the victim as more similar than males when she used an indirect/unilateral strategy to resist a stranger, possibly because female subjects saw themselves as unable to resist a stranger, while males may have felt that the use of an indirect/unilateral strategy may have signaled tacit acceptance and therefore felt dissimilar to the victim. On the other hand, females may have expressed their vulnerability to sexual assault by seeing the victim as more similar than males when she used a direct/bilateral strategy to resist an acquaintance because despite saying "No" the victim was assaulted anyway. Males, however, may have felt less similar to the victim in acquaintance rape when she used a direct/bilateral strategy because they felt more threatened by an assault in this condition. A male subject might reason that he would never assault a woman who used a direct/bilateral strategy and thus, the situation is dissimilar to one in which he might find himself. Thus, a defensive attribution (Shaver, 1970) would dictate a distancing from the victim. Alternatively, it is possible that males did not see the victim's use of a direct/bilateral strategy in acquaintance rape as being fully sincerely, supporting Burt's (1980) argument about rape myths. These arguments could have been strengthened if there were differences among experimental conditions for the measure of similarity with the defendant. Unfortunately, that was not the case. While it is possible that subjects were attempting to distance themselves from any assailant regardless of the power strategy used by the victim or the type of assault, the underlying reasons for this interaction are still unclear and will require further research to understand. It is also possible that the measure of similarity to the defendant was not a strong

measure of defensive attribution. While the study did include a measure of the likelihood of the scenario, it would be useful to include a measure of the degree to which the scenario was threatening to subject self-perceptions, particularly male fears about being accused of a sexual assault. It would also be useful to include additional measures which might show victim and assailant derogation in future research.

Assessment's of the victim's power strategy yielded data consistent with other research (e.g. Bullock & DeLamarter, 1989; DeLamarter & Hunt, 1990; Falbo & Peplau, 1980; Stevens & DeLamarter, 1991). Direct/bilateral strategies were seen by observers as more direct, competent, powerful, and effective than indirect/unilateral strategies. Moreover, for these measures there were no main effects for the subject gender or type of assault variables, nor where there any interactions. Interestingly enough, direct/bilateral strategies were not seen as particularly masculine (Falbo & Peplau, 1980) and a measure asking subjects to rate the victim's power strategy in terms of whether she expected compliance yielded an interaction between subject gender and power strategy. Females felt the victim expected compliance when the victim used a direct/bilateral strategy rather than an indirect/unilateral strategy. Males, on the other hand, felt the victim expected greater compliance when she used an indirect/unilateral strategy than a direct/bilateral strategy. According to Falbo and Peplau (1980), female use of an indirect/unilateral strategy reflects general female helplessness in an intimate relationship and they do not expect compliance. The present findings are clearly contrary to their argument. On the other hand, it should be remembered that the present scenario was not one in which women were simply trying to influence a partner; they were resisting a sexual assault. Thus, it

is understandable that females felt use of a direct/bilateral strategy indicated a clear "No" and expected the male to comply. Why males felt that the victim expected more compliance with an indirect/unilateral strategy is unclear. Perhaps, they were responding to gender role stereotypes (Johnson, 1976) and felt withdrawal and coldness (indirect/unilateral strategy) indicated that the victim was uninterested in sex while saying "No" (direct/bilateral strategy) was simply a female ruse and that she really meant "Yes." Such an explanation would have greater credibility if belief in rape myths (Burt, 1980) had been directly assessed.

It was very surprising, and very unexpected given the Stevens and DeLamarter (1991) study, that power strategy failed to interact with either subject gender or type of assault for measures assessing reactions to and responsibility for the assault. In fact, the only other interaction for power strategy was with type of assault for the measure of empathy with the defendant. When the victim used an indirect/bilateral power strategy to refuse the assailant, there was greater empathy with the defendant when he was a stranger rather than an acquaintance. Perhaps, subjects felt the victim had not expressed her refusal clearly enough leading the assailant to misinterpret her withdrawal and coldness as tacit consent. Although subjects did not accept the defendant's argument that the sex was consensual and that women are often cold initially, the victim's use of an indirect/unilateral strategy may have led subjects to believe that he had misinterpreted her refusal. Thus, while the defendant's behavior was wrong and he should be punished, perhaps the victim's behavior was not as forceful and explicit as it should be. On the other hand, when a direct/bilateral strategy was used, there was only slightly more empathy for the defendant in acquaintance rape than in stranger

rape. Perhaps subjects felt that the victim's refusal was less definite when refusing someone she knew than a stranger, leading them to have more empathy for the defendant in the acquaintance condition. Again, such a argument would be consistent with belief in rape myths (Burt, 1980).

In sum, the measures of responsibility as well as the measures assessing the scenario support the argument that males and females place themselves in the position of the assailant and the victim respectively, although the underlying reasons for such identifications may be different. While females and males saw the assailant as responsible for the assault, perhaps because the scenario stated he was convicted, they did not differ in their evaluations of the power strategy used by the victim to resist the assailant. Instead, Indirect/unilateral strategies, such as withdrawal, were rated more negatively than confrontational strategies, such as bargaining and persuasion both males and females. Clearly, the victim is expected to clearly and unambiguously resist as recommended by Bart (1981). Research is being conducted to explore the impact of other variables which might affect perceptions of responsibility in a date rape scenario including the appearance of the victim.

The present research program has focussed on the behavior of the victim in attributions of responsibility in sexual assault. Such a focus allows researchers to understand the variables which lead to blaming the victim and help understand the difficulties women face in bringing charges for date rape. Nevertheless, the other side of the equation in date rape concerns the behavior and characteristics of the assailant. Additional research is planned to examine the impact of assailant characteristics such as size, appearance, background to determine whether they have any impact on attributions of victim responsibility as a function of victim power strategy. Assailant

characteristics may be very important variables since they may affect an observer's belief in the credibility and legitimacy of the use of either an indirect/unilateral or a direct/bilateral strategy to resist an assailant. In some cases, assailant characteristics may be seen as supporting the victim's fear of harm whereas in other cases, it may not.

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Table 1

Summary of ANOVAs for measures of similarity and empathy

		Victim				Assailant			
		Similarity		Empathy		Similarity		Empathy	
Source of Variance	df	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Subject Gender (A)	1	121.69	34.27*	31.04	14.93*	6.70	2.70	4.88	2.24
Strategy (B)	1	2.88	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	1.44	<1
Type (C)	1	<1	<1	1.08	<1	<1	<1	4.54	2.10
AB	1	2.89	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	1.84	<1
AC	1	2.76	<1	9.81	4.72*	<1	<1	3.61	1.66
BC	1	1.34	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	14.10	6.48*
ABC	1	15.64	4.41*	<1	<1	1.93	<1	<1	<1
S/ABC	79	3.55		2.48		2.08		2.17	

* $p < .05$

Table 2

Table of Means for Three Way Interaction for Measure of Similarity to the Victim

	Power Strategy			
	Direct/Bilateral		Indirect/Unilateral	
	Type		Type	
	Acquaintance	Stranger	Acquaintance	Stranger
Subject Gender				
Male	1.60_a	2.30	2.70	1.20_b
Female	4.83_a	4.55	3.50	4.42_b

Note. The higher the number, the greater the perceived similarity between the subject and the victim. Numbers with subscripts in common are significantly different from each other $p < .05$.

Assault Scenarios

The victim is a 20 year old junior at a small liberal arts college in the northeastern part of the United States. The incident occurred in her apartment three blocks from the campus, on a Tuesday evening in the spring. The following is a portion of a transcript with a police officer experienced in interviewing rape victims. In the transcript, names are deleted.

Victim Interview

Police: In your own words, describe what happened.

Victim: I was alone in the apartment studying. My roommates had gone, one to the library and the other to a lecture. Actually, I was working on a paper for my English class. It was about 8:00 p.m. and there was a knock on the door. When I opened it, [stranger - there was a man standing there [acquaintance - (name deleted) was standing there]. He said his car had broken down and he wanted to use the phone. [stranger - At first I said "no" 'cause I was alone, but he said it was really important. I always thought this was a safe town and he seemed OK, so I changed my mind and let him in.] [Acquaintance - I said, "sure come on in."]

Anyway, he came in and used the phone. He seemed to call a friend and tell the person on the phone that his car had broken down and he wouldn't be able to get to the party for awhile. Then he hung up.

After the phone call he thanked me letting him use the phone. [Stranger - He said he was afraid that I wouldn't let him in because lots of women wouldn't be brave enough to let someone in when they were alone. I thought it was kinda strange that he would say that, but it also make me feel good that I could help somebody out. Boy was I ever dumb. I wish that I hadn't let him in.] [I said, "no problem" and asked him how things were, just to be polite. He said that he was pretty busy this semester and asked how I was. We talked for a little while about school. Everything seemed normal. Boy was I ever dumb. I never guessed what he was really like.]

Police: I know it's difficult to talk about, but what happened then?

Victim: Well, he asked if he could have a drink of water. Everything seemed OK, so I said, "sure" and went into the kitchen. I didn't hear him come up behind me. When I turned around, he was standing there with this funny smile on his face. I started to get scared then and asked him what he wanted. He said that I looked real pretty and that he would like to get to know me better. Now I was really getting scared, and I don't remember what I said. I know that what I wanted was to get rid of him. I just gave him the water.

He put the water down and grabbed me. At first he just tried to

kiss me. I tried to turn my head, but he did kiss me. Then he started to whisper in my ear. He talked about a lot of stuff he wanted to do to me. It was awful. He said that he thought I was real sexy. He said that the way I dressed and walked made him certain that I liked sex as much as he did. He went on to tell me how much he wanted to fuck me. Then he tried to feel my breasts.

Police: What did you do then?

Victim: [Direct/bilateral power - talking, reasoning] Well, at first I tried to talk to him. I told him that he was wrong, that I didn't want sex. I told him that sex without love was meaningless. I told him that what he was trying to do was wrong and that it would hurt both of us.

[Indirect/unilateral power - hinting, withdrawal] I didn't do anything! I was so scared. At first, I tried to laugh it off as a joke. Then I told him I was having my period, hoping that he would leave me alone. When that didn't work, I just froze. I felt real cold, not believing this was happening to me. I was real cold.

Police: Did you try to resist in any way?

Victim: What do you mean?

Police: Well, did you scream or try to fight with him? Did you try to kick him, break free and run?

Victim: (pause) No. He seemed so big and I didn't want to make him angry. I was afraid that he would really hurt me.

Police: OK, then what happened?

Victim: He pulled me to the bedroom. Actually, it was my roommate's room. When we got there he pulled off my clothes and raped me.

Police: Did anything happen afterwards?

Victim: Yeah, that's the really weird part. He seemed to want to sit and talk to me. He told that he really liked me and that he wanted to see me again. He told me that he knew that the first time would be tough, but that he thought we could really have a relationship sometime. He said that he knew that I wanted sex with him as much as he wanted it with me. He said he could sense my interest in him though it was hard to explain. He said that he knew that I was willing because I let him in the apartment, let him use the phone, and got him some water. I didn't know what to say and I felt so ashamed. I didn't say anything to him.

Then he just got up, got dressed and left.

I really felt dirty, so I went into the bathroom and took a long shower. When one of my roommates got home, that's where I was. I told her what happened, and she talked me into calling the police. At first, I didn't want to - I was too ashamed. I just hoped it would all go away.

Police: Thanks for being so open about it. It'll really help us. Now, just a few more questions. Can you describe the guy?

Victim: He's about 6'2", with dark hair, about my age. I'm not any good at guessing weight, but he's kinda skinny. Maybe 150 to 160 pounds, but that's just a guess.

Police: Can you be more specific about his hair color?

Victim: I'm not really sure. It was dark, but not exactly black - maybe auburn.

Police: Do you remember what color his eyes were?

Victim: I'm not sure, but I think they were brown.

Police: Was he dark, or fair skinned? Did he have a beard or facial hair?

Victim: He had a tan. He didn't have a beard or anything. He looked very neat and his hair was cut. He didn't look scruffy at all. He looked like a nice guy. In fact, I remember thinking when I opened the door that he was pretty good looking.

Police: What was he wearing?

Victim: He dressed like a lot of students. He had on jeans and a striped shirt. There was nothing unusual. Oh yeah, he was carrying a leather jacket over his shoulder.

Police: Have you seen him before? Would you recognize him?

Victim: [Stranger] I don't remember ever seeing him before, but he might be a student or someone who is around the campus. I would recognize him if I saw him again.

[Acquaintance] Yeah. He was in one of my classes last semester. It was big lecture class but we talked a couple of times. And, I I've seen him at some lectures and parties. We would nod and say "hello." We talked a few times at the grill. They were really nice conversations. In fact, he walked me home a few times at night when I was at the library and once after a party. Actually, I once thought that he was going to ask me out, but he didn't. I never thought (name deleted) would rape me. He seemed like a really nice guy.

Police: Thanks for all the help. We'll try to pick him up. However,

there's a couple of things I would like to go over again. First, did he threaten you in any way?

Victim: What do you mean?

Police: Well, did he have a weapon of any type - gun, knife? Did he threaten to hurt you if you didn't cooperate?

Victim: No, I never saw a gun or a knife. I don't remember him saying that he would hurt me if I didn't go along. I just remember being scared.

Police: Now, you said earlier that you resisted ....

Victim: [direct/bilateral] Well, I didn't yell or scream. I tried to talk him out of it. He knew that I wasn't interested.

[indirect/unilateral] Well, I didn't yell or scream. When hinting didn't work, I just froze. You would think that he would know I wasn't interested 'cause I didn't respond.

Police: Is there anything else you can tell us?

Victim: No, I think that's everything. There was one other weird thing. When this happened, I was listening to some CDs while I was working on the paper. They were my favorites. After what happened, I know I can't hear those songs again without remembering.

Police: Again, thanks for all your help. We should be able to get this guy. When we do, you'll probably have to identify him. Someone from the district attorney's office will be contacting you soon. If you think of anything else, please let me know. Here's my card. Also, you know that there is a rape crisis center in town. Let me leave some of their information with you. I'd be happy to get in touch with them for you. They have counselors and support groups which can be a real help.

Victim: Thanks. Let me think about it.

Defendant Interview

The defendant is a 22 year old male student (employee at a local business). He has no previous convictions nor has he ever been in trouble with the law. He was arrested and charged with rape within three days of the incident. He readily admitted to having had sex with the victim but claimed that she willingly consented. The following is a portion of the testimony he gave to the police. His attorney was present during the questioning.

Police: Tell us what happened in your own words.

Defendant: Well, I was on my way to a party when my car broke down.

[stranger - I saw lights on in the apartment and decided to ask if I could use the phone. This really nice looking girl opened the door. She was wearing a really sexy robe. I explained that my car had broken down and asked if I could use the phone. First she said "no, cause she was alone" but when I told her it was real important, she said "OK." I went in and used the phone. Afterwards, I thanked her and she asked if I wanted a drink of water. I said, "sure," and she went into the kitchen. I watched her from the living room. The way she was walking she sure seemed like she was interested in me, so I thought I'd see whether or not I'd be able to score. I followed her into the kitchen to strike up a conversation. I mean I was getting all these signals that she was really interested in me.]

[acquaintance - I saw lights on in (name deleted) apartment and decided to ask if I could use the phone. (name deleted) opened the door. She was wearing a really sexy robe. We said "hi" to each other and I told her that my car had broken down and asked if I could use the phone. She said "OK." I went in and used the phone. Afterwards, I thanked her and she asked if I wanted a drink of water. I said, "sure," and she went into the kitchen. I watched her from the living room. The way she was walking she sure seemed like she was interested in me, so I thought I'd see whether or not I'd be able to score. I followed her into the kitchen to strike up a conversation.]

Police: What kind of signals?

Defendant: It's kinda hard to explain. Well, she was wearing this really sexy robe like I said. It was open at the neck and it was clear that she wasn't wearing much on under. Then her voice. It was kinda husky and sexy. Girls don't dress and talk like that if they're not really interested in sex. And her walk was real sexy. You know, when girls are really interested they shake their butt. She was doin' that. Also, she could've asked me to leave right after the phone call. She didn't seem to me to be in a hurry to have me leave. I figured that I'd see what happened.

Police: Then what happened?

Defendant: Well, I told her that I thought she was real pretty - there's nothing wrong with that. I also told her that I'd like to get to know her better. You know, just some opening moves. She seemed to know what was going on. Well, then I went and put my arms around her. She didn't seem to resist, so I tried to kiss her. She turned her head, but I thought that she was just playing hard to get. So, I kissed her anyway. Then I whispered in her ear about how sexy she was and how sex would be really great.

Police: Did she say anything then?

Defendant: [direct/bilateral - Yeah, she gave me some story about how she

didn't want to have sex and that it would be meaningless without love. You know, the stuff that women say so that they can protect their reputation. But, I really knew that she wanted it as much as I did. I mean, I never threatened her, or anything. I didn't have any weapon, and I never said I would hit her or anything. I figured that her saying that stuff was all part of the game. Guys try to score and girls say "no" when they really mean "yes."]

[indirect/unilateral - No, she didn't do anything. She told me some story about it being her period, but I didn't believe it. Besides, you can still have sex when she's having her period. I've done it before. She was a little frigid, but I knew that I could warm her up. I think she was making some kind of excuse to protect her reputation. But, I really knew that she wanted it as much as I did. I mean, I never threatened her, or anything. I didn't have any weapon and I never said I would hit her or anything. I figured that her saying that stuff was all part of the game. Guys try to score and girls say "no" when they really mean "yes."]

Police: So then what happened?

Defendant: Well we went into her bedroom and had sex. I think she really enjoyed it. It was no big deal.

Police: And you didn't use any force?

Defendant: Hey, no way! She didn't fight or yell or scream or anything.

Police: Had you known her before the incident?

Defendant: [stranger - No, but I might have seen her around campus. I come to a lot of events here.]

[acquaintance - We were in a class last semester. We talked a couple of times. We also met in the grill and talked. I walked her home a couple of times. I thought about asking her out a couple of times, but I never did. We would say "hi" to each other on campus.]

Police: Is there anything else you want to add to your statement?

Defendant: No, everything I told you is the truth. I don't understand why she's claiming rape. It was nothing like that. After the sex we talked for awhile. I told her how much I liked her and how I thought we might have a relationship. When I left, everything was fine. I thought she enjoyed it as much as I did. In fact I was gonna call her in a couple of days.

Note: The assailant was tried on a charge of rape. He entered a plea of innocent, arguing that the victim willingly consented to sex. The jury convicted him.

Questionnaire

Please read each of the following questions carefully. Indicate your opinion by placing a check mark at the appropriate point on the scale. Remember that your responses are completely anonymous so feel free to indicate your honest opinion.

How well did the defendant know the victim?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
very well — not at all

How clear was the victim in indicating that she did not want sex

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
very clear — very unclear

Given the circumstances of the rape, how serious a crime do you think it was?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
not very serious — very serious

On a scale of 1 to 10, how responsible was the male defendant for the rape? In answering this question, use 1 to indicate not at all responsible and 10 to indicate completely responsible.

_____

On a scale of 1 to 10, how responsible was the female victim for the rape? In answering this question, use 1 to indicate not at all responsible and 10 to indicate completely responsible.

_____

How likely is the incident described?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
very likely — very unlikely

How similar is the female victim to you?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
very dissimilar — very similar

How similar is the male defendant to you?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
very similar — very dissimilar

How much empathy do you feel for the male defendant?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
a great deal — not at all

How much empathy do you feel for the female defendant?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
not at all — a great deal

How much force did the defendant use to have sex with the victim?

_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____
very little — a great deal

Think carefully about how the victim resisted the defendant. How would you rate her tactics to resist the defendant?

direct _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ indirect

incompetent _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ competent

powerful _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ powerless

ineffective _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ effective

expecting compliance _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ not expecting compliance

masculine _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____ masculine

Assume that you are the judge at the defendant's trial. Given that the defendant has been convicted, under state law he must serve some jail time. However, you can sentence him from 1 to 10 years in prison. Given the circumstances of the crime and the defendant's past record, how many years in prison would you sentence him?

_____

Briefly describe what you think this experiment is about. Please use the back of this sheet. Thank you for your assistance in this study.